

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
*National Records Center*  
P.O. Box 648010  
Lee's Summit, MO 64064-8010



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

COW2019500066

April 9, 2019

Taylor Scott Amarel  
MuckRock News  
DEPT MR 70418  
411A Highland Ave  
Somerville, MA 02144-2516

Dear Taylor Scott Amarel:

We received your request March 28, 2019 regarding documents, emails, attachments, or memos containing any of the following non-case-sensitive strings: “whistleblower” or “whistleblowers” from January 1, 2013 to the Present. You specifically requested the following:

- 1.) Documents, emails, attachments, or memos from January 1, 2013 to Present day;
- 2.) Sent, received, or copied to dhsexcsec@hq.dhs.gov or USCIS.ImmigrantinvestorProgram@uscis.dhs.gov; and
- 3.) Containing any of the following non-case-sensitive strings: “whistleblower” or “whistleblowers”

Your request is being handled under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552). It has been assigned the following control number: COW2019500066. Please cite this number in all future correspondence about your request.

We respond to requests on a first-in, first-out basis and on a multi-track system. Your request has been placed in the complex track (Track 2).

Consistent with 6 C.F.R. § 5.5(a) of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) FOIA regulations, USCIS processes FOIA requests according to their order of receipt. Although USCIS' goal is to respond within 20 business days of receipt of your request, FOIA does permit a 10-day extension of this time period in certain circumstances. Due to the increasing number of FOIA requests received by this office, we may encounter some delay in processing your request. Additionally, due to the scope and nature of your request, USCIS will need to locate, compile, and review responsive records from multiple offices, both at headquarters and in the field. USCIS may also need to consult with another agency or other component of the Department of Homeland Security that have a substantial interest in the responsive information. Due to these unusual circumstances, USCIS will invoke a 10-day extension for your request pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(6)(B). Please contact our office if you would like to limit the scope of your request or to agree on a different timetable for the processing of your request. We will make every effort to comply with your request in a timely manner.

In accordance with Department of Homeland Security Regulations (6 C.F.R. § 5.3(c)), your request is deemed to constitute an agreement to pay any fees that may be chargeable up to \$25.00. Fees may be charged for searching for records sought at the respective clerical, professional, and/or managerial rates of \$4.00/\$7.00/\$10.25 per quarter hour, and for duplication of copies at the rate of \$.10 per copy. The first 100 copies and two hours of search time are not charged, and the remaining combined charges for search and duplication must exceed \$14.00 before we will charge you any fees. Most requests do not require any fees; however, if fees in excess of \$25.00 are required, we will notify you beforehand.

This office now offers an online delivery option. If you would like to receive the requested records online,

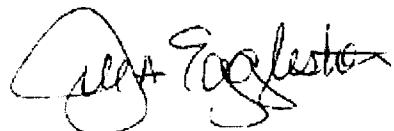
you will need to register this request at [first.uscis.gov](http://first.uscis.gov). If you do not already have a MyUSCIS account you will be prompted to create one. Once logged on, click the "Register Request" link where you will be asked to enter your control number COW2019500066 and the following six digit PIN: 338474. If you do not wish to take advantage of this option, we will be providing your records on a Compact Disc (CD) for use on your personal computer. To request your responsive records on paper, please include your control number and write to the above address Attention: FOIA/PA Officer, or fax them to (802) 860-6908.

The National Records Center (NRC) has the responsibility to ensure that personally identifiable information (PII) pertaining to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) clients is protected. In our efforts to safeguard this information, we may request that additional information be provided to facilitate and correctly identify records responsive to your request. Though submission of this information is voluntary, without this information, your request may be delayed while additional steps are taken to ensure the correct responsive records are located and processed. Further, if we are unable to positively identify the subject of the record we may be unable to provide records responsive to your FOIA request.

You may check the status of your FOIA request online at [www.uscis.gov/FOIA](http://www.uscis.gov/FOIA). Click the "Check Status of Request" button in the middle of the web page or "FOIA Request Status Check & Average Processing Times" on the left side under "Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FOIA)." Then click "FOIA Check Status of Request" at the bottom of the page and follow the instructions given. If you have any questions concerning your pending FOIA/PA request, or to check the status of a pending application or petition, please call The National Customer Service Center at (800) 375-5283. Please be aware that the National Records Center no longer accepts FOIA/PA related questions directly by phone.

All FOIA/PA related requests, including address changes, must be submitted in writing and be signed by the requester. Please include the Control Number listed above on all correspondence with this office. Requests may be mailed to the FOIA/PA Officer at the PO Box listed at the top of the letterhead, emailed to [USCIS.FOIA@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:USCIS.FOIA@uscis.dhs.gov), or sent by fax to (802) 860-6908. You may also submit FOIA/PA related questions to our email address at [FOIAPAQuestions@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:FOIAPAQuestions@uscis.dhs.gov).

Sincerely,



Jill A. Eggleston  
Director, FOIA Operations



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

— NEW —

## USCIS FOIA IS GOING DIGITAL!

USCIS is moving to an end-to-end digital FOIA process! The FOIA Office is excited to introduce phase one – **paperless delivery of your response**. You can now digitally access responsive records as soon as they are processed, eliminating mail time and removing the risk of receiving a CD that may be damaged in the mail. This delivery option is just one of several enhancements that we are currently putting in place to make it easier for you to submit a request to our office and help reduce the time it takes to receive responsive records.

### **Signing up for Digital Delivery is Quick and Easy:**

In the attached acknowledgement letter, follow the instructions on how to set up an account through myUSCIS and link that account to your case. Once complete, you will be able to log into the digital delivery center to view and / or download responsive records, once available. *If you already have a myUSCIS account, simply login and link the case to your existing account.* Once you have linked your case to your account, we will notify you through email once your case has been processed and your records are ready to be accessed.

### **More Digital Greatness is Coming Soon:**

We are also excited to highlight some additional enhancements that will make it easier to make and manage your request, and receive responsive records more quickly, to include:

- Online FOIA request submission
- Faster case processing
- Online personal case management

*If you do not wish to take advantage of this option, we will be providing your records through the mail on a Compact Disc (CD) for use on your personal computer. To request your responsive records on paper, please include your control number and write to the above address Attention: FOIA/PA Officer, or fax your request to (816) 350-5785.*